

James Joyce and alcoholism

Timofte, Daniel; Colibaba, Stefan; Ciobica, Irina; Ciobica, Alin

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Timofte, D., Colibaba, S., Ciobica, I., & Ciobica, A. (2015). James Joyce and alcoholism. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 59, 146-156. <https://doi.org/10.18052/www.scipress.com/ILSHS.59.146>

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY Lizenz (Namensnennung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier:
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.de>

Terms of use:

This document is made available under a CC BY Licence (Attribution). For more Information see:
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

James Joyce and Alcoholism

CIOBICA Irina¹, CIOBICA Alin^{1,2}, TIMOFTE Daniel^{3*}, COLIBABA Stefan¹

¹ "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, Iasi, Romania

² Center of Biomedical Research of the Romanian Academy, Iasi, Romania

³ "Gr. T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Iasi, Romania

*Corresponding Author: dantimofte@yahoo.com

Keywords: James Joyce, alcoholism.

ABSTRACT. This paper will zoom-in upon one of the greatest modernist writers and influential figures of the twentieth century, James Joyce. In this way, following his life's developments, from his troubled childhood to his frantic life abroad with Nora Barnacle, his literary work and his inspirational sources, we will try to establish whether alcohol consumption hindered or aided his creative process. In order to do so, this article will present events that might have triggered the drinking, the rituals and 'customs' of the process, as they seem to be in some kind of interrelation. These facts will be rendered while using close textual analyses of his literary works in the context of addiction.

1. THE INTRODUCTION OF THE 'DRUNK NARRATIVE' TERM

In this way, firstly we will introduce the concept of 'drunk narrative', which, as we will show immediately, is quite important in the manner we decided to approach the connections between James Joyce and alcoholism. Thus, alcohol consumption and addiction are made textual, visible, just as modernist writers are themselves proclaimed to be alcoholic. As the American scholar John W. Crowley writes: 'Within an emergent culture of conspicuous consumption, addiction would become, in effect, the sign of modernity itself. Alcoholism and literary modernism emerged together in a dialectical relationship that produced, in the 'drunk narrative', both a portrait of the modernist as an alcoholic and a portrait of the alcoholic as a modernist.'

Maybe the most emblematic type of modernist fiction that uses alcohol consumption as a theme, employing it in order to speak in the name of the modern moment is Hemingway's work. As James Nicholls, a scholar of the history of alcohol and society, phrases it, in a world dominated by a feeling which Wyndham Lewis described as the 'everyday drunkenness of the normal real', 'writers employed alcohol as a fundamental structure in their narrative schemes, [as] the optic through which a complex network of representations [is] brought to light'.

A concrete example of the 'drunk narrative' can be found in Hemingway's short story 'Hills like White Elephants'. Here, we have the scenario in which two Americans, male and female, sit at a bar in a train station in Spain, order beer, look at the scenery, and then order more drinks, skirting around the issue of Jig's potential abortion. In their evasive dialogue, alcohol seems to serve the role displacing talk of the pregnancy. When Jig tries a new drink, she concludes that it 'tastes of liquorice' as '[e]verything does' (212). 'Especially, she adds, all the things you've waited so long for, like absinthe' (212). Absinthe is clearly used as an inadequate surrogate for that which Jig has waited so long for, the baby, yet a desire for it, however sarcastic, can be safely uttered aloud. What seems to be significant when taking into account Hemingway's use of alcohol in the story is the fact that the couple's drinking, their attention to different kinds of drinks and the rituals they entail, signifies their claim to modernity.

In this case, one may take also the example of James Joyce. As Lilienfeld interestingly claims, neither he, nor Hardy, nor Woolf for that matter, were alcoholics, but their narrative may be depicted as 'alcoholic'.

The ritualized drinking appears earlier in his literary career in "Ivy Day at the Committee Room", a short story which melds lobbying and drinking, which will later lead to 'Ulysses' as a novel.

Here, men sit in a home, avoiding the rain and cold outside. They had been canvassing neighbourhoods for votes, but eventually wait anxiously for a boy from the closest pub to deliver their booze. The celebratory action of drinking acts as a surrogate for their pervasive pain and disconnect from their history. The men fill their empty lives with alcohol, an agent that has numbed them to the point where they see no ill in corrupting a young boy, going to the lengths of offering him a drink for his trouble:

‘The boy came back with the corkscrew. The old man opened three bottles and was handing back the corkscrew when Mr Henchy said to the boy:

-Would you like a drink boy?

-If you please, sir, said the boy.

-The old man opened another bottle grudgingly, and handed it to the boy.

-What age are you? he asked.

-Seventeen, said the boy.

As the old man said nothing further the boy took the bottle, said: Here’s my best respects, sir. To Mr Henchy, drank the contents, put the bottle back on the table and wiped his mouth with his sleeve. Then he took up the corkscrew and went out of the door sideways, muttering some form of salutation’. (Joyce, 129)

This depressing scene of men whose national fervour dissipates into drunken self-pity echoes the empty nature of their conviction and repetitive ritual drinking.

Furthermore, taking ‘Ulysses’ as an example, alcohol and drinking is an undeniable recurring theme. It seems as though half of the time, the characters are either at the pub or on their way to meet someone there and even when the scene does not take place in one of the local pubs, many of the characters presented are most likely to be under the influence.

In the chapter titled "Cyclops", alcohol is particularly highlighted, as drinking and Irish nationalist fervour come to a climatic point in Barney Kiernan's pub. Bloom casually joins a group of men and although it begins civil, a citizen drinks enough to start insulting Bloom and his wife. Although the citizen was insulting Bloom for not being loyal to his country and for being Jewish, he also felt disrespected by the fact that Bloom turned down a drink and did not buy a round for the other men present.

This type of narrative strategy might also ‘mimic the behaviour often arising from alcoholism’ as Lilienfeld notes that ‘A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man’ shows ‘denial while representing denial’ through Simon Dedalus. His denial that his life has been ruined by alcoholism results in his fantasy-inclined son’s rejections of reality, followed by the denial by the narrator which might be conscious or unconscious on the part of the writer.

Lilienfeld proceeds by using Woolf as a somewhat unusual example of ‘drunk narrative’. Although her literary protagonists cannot be actually labelled as alcoholics they portray a different kind of addiction. Three of the characters in ‘To the Lighthouse’ engage in a strange triangle of obsession: Lily Briscoe is obsessed with Mrs. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay is obsessed with her husband, while Mr. Ramsay is obsessed with himself. This addiction serves as an equivalent of the alcohol in a way omnipresent in the other literary texts mentioned.

John W. Crowley argues that Jake Barnes appropriates the modernist ‘drunk narrative’ as well, in his so textually dense, often overlooked upon its verisimilitudinous qualities, novel, ‘Nightwood’. He manages here to transform the tendency toward self-pity and denial into a subversive sham. His central figure, the moral figure, if he may be called this way, the philosopher-clown Matthew O'Connor is able to survive the ‘White Logic’ (what Jack London's John Barleycorn (1913) metaphorically portrays as being the "agonized sense of life's hopelessness and worthlessness" (20)) only because he was aided by intoxication.

Furthermore, whiskey, very much present in this literary work, seem to turn, Don Birnam, the writer in “The Lost Weekend,” into his own demonic alter ego, a violent, rude, doppelgänger of the talented and modest man who can quote Shakespeare at the bar, but who can at the same time tune on it when intoxicated.

Crowley further defines the modernist narrative of inebriety by giving the alcoholic the status of a "prophet . . . a deadly serious man among men, a visionary with tough-mindedness to match his rugged physical constitution" (33). By dramatizing intoxication as a metaphysical struggle, this 'genre' transforms "the hopeless drunk" into "the modernist Everyman, a symbol of suffering humanity in the apocalyptic twentieth century" (80).

Other examples of 'drunk narrative' usage might be found in Melville's literary works as beer, wine and spirits seem to flow through his novels. In 'Moby-Dick', Ishmael ponders the "very large" quantity of beer stocked by an old Dutch whale ship. He admires the "high livers" aboard and draws the following lesson: "if you can get nothing better out of this world, get a good dinner out of it at least. And this empties the decanter." (Melville) Melville thus simultaneously refers to writing, as he calls that chapter "The Decanter", and to drinking, which will be part of any good dinner.

In 'Pierre', Cyrus the Great becomes Cyrus the Wise because of the epitaph he chooses: "I could drink a great deal of wine, and it did me a great deal of good." The narrator of 'White-Jacket' promotes drinking prodigiously, by endorsing the "wise example" of camels, which "drank for the thirst past, the thirst present, and the thirst to come." (Amis)

Furthermore, Norman Mailer's 'Tough Guys Don't Dance' provides another strong example of alcohol used as a key part of the narrative scheme. In Provincetown alcohol is the one that makes other people bearable. "In the silence of our winter," Tim Madden says, "dull acquaintances, drunks, wretches and bores could be elevated to a species thought of as friend." The narrator can drink with a man he dislikes because he, like Madden, is a writer. "In winter we needed each other if only to be critical of our contemporaries together.... Our rage against the talent of those who were our age and successful made the marrow of many an evening...." Drinking is also used to serve other purposes in the novel, as the protagonist wakes up with alcohol-induced amnesia leaving him uncertain about whether he committed murder.

2. THE PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

Although the most prolific examples that bind together alcohol and the creative process seem to be provided by the New World, this paper will focus on zooming in on a non-American figure. James Augustine Aloysius Joyce (2 February 1882 – 13 January 1941), of Irish origin, is one of the authors of the twentieth century thought of by many as being among the most influential and at the same time enigmatic literary figure of the time.

His works have been depicted as being intensely autobiographic and include meticulous descriptions of illness and states of health, which is really no surprise in view of Joyce's medical history. Examples may lay in his literary universe that abound with references to syphilis, alcoholism and a significant number of other illnesses: 'The Dead' revolves around the tragic love of a doomed tubercular youth; 'Ulysses' has a graphic description of Stephen Dedalus mother's death, a funeral and a birth; the same Stephen Dedalus, the character based somewhat on Joyce, attends a drinking session with medical students at the lying-in hospital In 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man', just as the author had done as a student.

3. JOYCE AND ALCOHOL USE

In this way, in the welcoming and bibulous atmosphere of Dublin, which he choose to project not so very often, yet so well, in the drinking scenes in 'Ulysses', 'Dubliners', 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man', Joyce took to alcohol with enthusiasm. He had avoided it for the majority of his younger years but began drinking after his mother's death, then a series of events almost too psychologically neat to be true followed: Under Gogarty's able tutelage, which he decided not to refuse, Joyce began to drink heavily. At first, to assert a fancied resemblance between himself and the buoyant Elizabethans, he called for 'sack'. Gradually he shifted from sack to Guinness's unpretentious and less expensive stout, 'the wine of the country.' (Ellmann)

During his time in Paris, Joyce's routine revolved around the cafés, which he used as world observation points and for meeting friends.

His daily consumption was often several bottles of white wine, consumed until the early hours of the morning, much to his wife's disapproval. He did not cope well with alcohol. A friend of his observed that 'drink went to his legs, rather than his head' (Davies, 89), with the result that he became ataxic. As he was so light, it was easy for friends to carry him home.

His capacity for alcohol was small, and he was prone to collapses. As his drinking progressed, Joyce let it become a driving force in his life. He found himself repeating his father's extravagant ways and, in the full throws of masculine anxieties, "The thought of being the sole support of a woman and child drove him to new bouts of drinking". (Ellmann, 219) This behaviour mimics the drinking that followed the Irish famine's most deadly years; Joyce found himself caught in the Irish curse that plagued many of his friends, relatives, and countrymen.

Despite its pull on his life, Joyce was fully aware of the dangers of the drink: "He never drank before sundown." (Lyons, 112-121) Once sundown occurred, however, few doubted Joyce's commitment to light conversation and festivities. The midday crowd from 'Ulysses', gathered at Barney Keirnan's Public House is thus not strange to Joyce. Though he never drank during the afternoon, he knew many men who did and knew thereby the intensely negative effects. Two such notorious alcoholics were Brendan Behan and Flann O'Brien, whose lives were cut significantly short because of alcoholism.

"He engaged in excess with considerable prudence," noted biographer Richard Ellmann. For Joyce, drinking combined "purpose and relaxation," allowing him to watch how people behaved and hear how they talked (which he would later make use of in his work), to discuss his anxieties with friends, and "to forget his troubles and circumvent his reticences". (Ellmann)

Stanislaus Joyce assessed his father's, John's, drinking as culturally normative, as part of the 'the hard drinking generation[']s behaviour'. Similarly, one of the things James most admired about his father (as Brenda Maddox's biography of Nora Barnacle makes clear, he tried to imitate) was the elder's sociability, the linkage of his drinking to male bonding in the pub around liquor, song and storytelling.

Apparently, both Joyce and Kingsley Amis associate drinking with conversation, whether with acquaintances or with strangers. "What is better than to sit at the end of the day and drink wine with friends, or with substitutes for friends?" Joyce once asked fellow writer Padraic Colum.

"Writing is a form of exhibitionism; alcohol lowers inhibitions and prompts exhibitionism in many people. Writing requires an interest in people; alcohol increases sociability and makes people more interesting. Writing involves fantasy; alcohol promotes fantasy. Writing requires self-confidence; alcohol bolsters confidence. Goodwin postulates, underlining the most important or maybe the most summoned reason of the binge drinking of the creative but somewhat troubled minds.

Critical reaction to his work caused some of the worry from which he sought temporary reprieve after dark.

Discouraged by the responses he received after showing early drafts of 'Finnegans Wake' to uncomprehending friends and unsure if his worsening health would allow him to finish it, Joyce considered enlisting a co-author. Whiskey factored in his evaluation of candidates. He thought of recruiting James Stephens in part because he liked that the book's cover could prominently display their overlapping initials as JJ&S, which happened to be how his favourite brand, John Jameson and Sons, was commonly known.

4. 'DRUNK NARRATIVE' IN JOYCE'S LITERARY UNIVERSE

Although he was never officially diagnosed as being an alcoholic, throughout his life, Joyce was no stranger to the binge drinking world, whether it was the case of normative, social or clinical consumption, whether he was the protagonist of it or a mere observer. Thus, it is safe to say that the Irishman owned a fair amount of knowledge on this topic. The question is whether this insight is rendered in his literary works and has he managed to represent the alcoholic's psyche in a realistic manner or not.

I will try to show how the effects of alcoholism organized Joyce's texts, as it seems they were transposed in the narrative strategies in each of his novels that at times mimic the behaviours and feeling states often arising from this condition.

Thus, several situations in 'Dubliners', his collection of short stories about life in Dublin ['the dead centre of paralysis'], revolve around alcohol addiction, a condition Joyce would have been all too familiar with growing up with his father. There are a number references in the book to delirium tremens and alcoholic psychosis.

The drunken body acts as a primary emblem of paralysis in *Dubliners*. The rhetorical tension over the classification of the chronic drinker in Joyce's stories emerges from contemporary ideas about excess. Joyce delivers a compressed image of the colonial situation through self-indulgent Irish men and women.

J. B. Lyons notes that "the most prevalent disease in *Dubliners* is alcoholism," and James Fairhall observes that the collection "reveals a sharp awareness of the social damage caused by drinking." Hardly a story occurs without reference to drunkenness, usually among the petit-bourgeois Catholic men who represent Joyce's Ireland. The intoxicated man is so prominent in the stories that he becomes a model of physical and emotional incapacity. Joyce understands the effects of chronic drinking as both moral and somatic. He uses terminologies to describe the paralytic that were being used to characterize the heavy drinker. Joyce thus adopts the medical view of chronic drinking, but also surpasses it.

Jean Kane considers that interpreting the *Dubliners*' paralysis as intimately connected to chronic drunkenness leads to a revisionary reading of Joyce's literary interventions in the politics of colonialism. Although he is usually seen to be criticizing London or Rome, Joyce actually criticizes the mechanism that produces both colonizer and colonized.

In 'Ulysses', the alienated poet Stephen Dedalus struck interest with his potation of alcoholic choice, absinthe, because the surreal incidents depicted in the episode 'Circe' were representative of the psychological effects of the liqueur on the young man. Joyce's use of absinthe as a symbol in 'Ulysses' is intrinsically connected to Stephen Dedalus' role as a bohemian artist who rejects bourgeois notions of identity in favor the truth. The content of 'Circe' written in play script format, illustrates absinthe-induced hallucinations, giving the episode a surreal quality. Stephen's taste for absinthe also has larger implications related to his student days in Paris during which he met Irish nationalist Kevin Egan.

David M. Earle's 2003 article "Green eyes, I see you. Fang, I feel": The Symbol of Absinthe in *Ulysses*" illustrates a number of symbolic meanings attributed to absinthe in the novel:

In 'Oxen of the Sun', the episode preceding 'Circe' Stephen spends his latest paycheck on rounds of absinthe for him and his friends, announcing in Latin, 'Nos omnes biberimus viridum toxicum, diabolus capiat posterioria nostra [We will all drink green poison and the devil take the hindmost (Gifford and Seidman 446)]' (Joyce, 348). Unsurprisingly, Stephen is severely intoxicated when Leopold Bloom re-encounters him inside a brothel during the 'Circe' episode and decides to protect the younger Dedalus out of paternal instinct.

Interestingly enough, Bloom and Stephen share a taste for foreign alcohol, the latter for absinthe and former for Burgundy and this represents these characters' social position outside the norms of Irish drinking culture. After breaking a chandelier in the brothel, Stephen gets into an argument with a couple of English soldiers, whom Bloom attempts to placate: 'He doesn't know what he's saying. Taken a little more than is good for him. Absinthe. Greeneyed monster. I know him. He's a gentleman, a poet. It's all right' (Joyce, 483). Although the conflict escalates into a street fight that leaves Stephen unconscious in the gutter by the end of the episode, Bloom's unsuccessful appeal is interesting in that he explicitly refers to absinthe as the 'green-eyed monster.' This has been interpreted as an allusion to Iago's description of jealousy in Shakespeare's tragedy, *Othello*, as well as to traditional conceptions of absinthe as a destructive hallucinogen embodied by a green diabolical fairy. Bloom's mention of Stephen being a poet is also relevant in the context of the latter discussed issue of the binge drinking creative mind. Having consumed absinthe proves to be

relevant since it was ‘the favored alcohol of prominent turn-of-the-century writers and artists living in Paris, probably the most relevant of whom was Irish poet and writer Oscar Wilde’. (Earle, 692).

Throughout ‘Circe,’ the longest and most surreal of the eighteen episodes in James Joyce’s ‘Ulysses’, the green fairy of Dublin hovers and brings to life the most hidden dreams, desires, and fears portrayed in this chapter. In his article, Earle affirms that, ‘absinthe is the stimulus for the hallucinations and visual displacement of “Circe”’. The green fairy is absinthe, Stephen’s drink of the evening, which has links to his past as a student in Paris, is responsible for his present in Nighttown and will potentially determine his future as a potential artist and writer.

Furthermore, in ‘A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man’ can also be discovered a generous number of alcohol related allusions, although there is a thesis, that I will later on refer to, that the narrative strategy used here it rather underlines the denial of the presence of the alcohol consumption related problems.

For example, the name of the city of Cork itself supplies a pun connected to the ‘great stone jar’ from which Simon Dedalus’ Christmas whiskey flows. Exploring Dublin, Stephen noticed in the harbour ‘a multitude of corks that lay bobbing ...in a thick yellow scum...’(Joyce) a possible allusion to the unstopped whiskey container from which the Dedaluses’ troubles seem to have begun to flow. As he replaces the whiskey jug in the locker, he is not shown to replace the stopper. Uncorked, the liquor becomes the alcohol he drinks from his ‘pocketflask’, that he will later on in the novel enjoy in the train heading to Cork.

But maybe one of the best embodiments of ‘drunk narrative’ in ‘A Portrait...’ lays in the Christmas dinner hosted by the Dedalus family. Simon Dedalus’s and Mr. Casey’s drinking whiskey before the Christmas dinner has been depicted as being culturally normative. This is mainly because Christmas had been ‘a time of excess in European drinking customs for centuries’ (Stivers, Bales), ‘a pattern that continued in somewhat modified form as a part of European urban life in the nineteenth century’ (Harrison).

5. ‘DRUNK NARRATIVE’ HIDDEN IN ‘DENIAL NARRATIVE’ IN ‘A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN’

Jane Lilienfeld, in her book, titled ‘Reading Alcoholism: Theorizing Character and Narrative in Selected Novels Of Thomas Hardy, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf’, sprung, through a ground breaking study that combines the social, the psychological and the scientific, while examining Joyce’s novel, a thesis regarding the narrative technique utilized by him in ‘A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man’.

The narrative type, through the denial of parental alcoholism and its silent presence in the novel, emphasizes the way in which the effects of alcoholism of a family member or a mentor manage to influence the shaping of a literary text.

The author ‘historicizes the controversy, legitimating the use of the accumulated evidence of the impact on children of parental alcoholism as a tool of literary analysis.’ (Lilienfeld)

Lilienfeld succeeds in bringing both the alcohol related problems in the author’s family and in the lives of his characters, as well, to the center of this analysis. By doing so, she expands the understanding of addiction directly linked to the literary talent.

In this way, zooming in on the father figure, if I may call him this way, in ‘A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man’, Lilienfeld connects it to the paternal figure in Joyce’s life, as they seem to be intertextually inseparable.

To sustain this idea, scholars have also proven an existent link between the father in Stanislaw Joyce’s ‘Complete Dublin Diary’ (which depicts John Joyce himself, whom his son insists on holding responsible for causing suffering and deforming the daily life of his wife and children, through his drinking) and James Joyce’s composing process in the creation of Simon Dedalus, the father in the aforementioned novel.

Lilienfeld considers that the fact that James had firsthand experiences with an alcoholic family member made denial, noted as being heavily used among diagnosed alcoholics or/and their

family and close ones, as a way of suggesting the presence of the drinking related problem, easily to render.

Interestingly, alcohol itself, as a physical presence, seems to be most of the time missing from the alcoholic home in 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man'. But the visible absence of alcohol is significant as it seems that Joyce has deliberately submerged a 'drunk narrative' inside the novel. Simon Dedalus's alcoholism is deliberately disguised in order to influence motive and characterization.

'Alcoholism is a multidimensional disorder that transforms the personality of the alcoholic in such a way that certain feelings, perceptions, denial strategies, and thinking alterations characterize the illness in many ways' (Lilienfeld). Heavy drinking also affects those involved with the alcoholic, who frequently manifest similar emotional deformations such as mood disorders, thinking distortions, and severe difficulties in relations, notes Lilienfeld. As Simon Dedalus suffers his economic reversals in 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man', his alcoholism negatively affects his beloved son almost as much as it disrupts his own life, and the reader can easily spot some of the symptoms listed above.

More recently, Joyce critics have established that Joycean narratives deny repressed material while making it manifest.

In characterising narrative occurrences of exactly this type, Gerard Genette names the deliberate removal from narrative of important moments as paralipsis, a '[systematic] concealing...Here the narrative does not skip over a moment in time, as in an ellipsis, but it sidesteps a given element' (52, emphasis in original). These are events that might be important to a deeper understanding of the character's 'affective life', and yet both the narrative and the narrator suppress information about them (Genette, 52). Characterizing some paralipses as 'implied ellipses', or as narrative moments of 'opaque silence', Genette defines these as ellipses 'whose very presence is not announced in the text and which the reader can infer only from some chronological lacuna or gap in narrative continuity...we will never, even retrospectively, know anything of what [that experience was like]' (108)

By examining what Gerard Genette labels paralipsis, Hans Walter Gabler discovered important lacunae in 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man'. His findings and Friedman's revealing the existence of narrative denial in the novel provided Lilienfeld with a central strategy to make the alcoholism narrative visible.

Drinking is a suppressed narrative, referent that helps make sense of unrelated events and paralipses in the text. In the Joycean novel, the narrative method and the characterization of Stephen Dedalus in relation to his father reveal the hidden presence of alcoholism.

Lilienfeld argues that paralipsis, in the second chapter, is an 'objective correlative' for the denial process inherent in alcoholism. H.W. Gabler sustains also that reconstructing material obscured by a paralipsis is crucial to understanding Stephen's writing in 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man'.

One of the most visible examples of paralipsis in the novel is the story of bar drinking which is told in place of the removed narrative of the sale of Simon Dedalus's Cork property. The narrative suppression of the sale has similarities to the psychological phenomena of 'splitting' dissociation, and alcoholic denial. This may be read as an implied connection as the tale of alcohol is told in place of the sale of the property.

This implied ellipsis covers two simultaneous but never written narratives, one of the auction, and the other of his father's activities during the auction. 'Where is the property that is sold? How much it is worth? Who attends the auction? Who buys the property?' These are the questions that automatically sprung from the reader's mind. The denied disclosure, however, is replaced by suggested causality. For not only is a narrative of the sale 'censored', to use Genette's word(53), but Simon's use of alcohol is 'foregrounded in the narrative position where readers might expect the sale to have been'. (Lilienfeld)

These textual 'blackouts' are not physiological, but serve as an 'unconscious' narrative response that can eliminate the recognition of Simon's increasing dependence on alcohol and the havoc that it causes in his life and his family's.

Lilienfeld also argues that the novel's complex presentation of Parnell also embeds him in the narrative's methods of representing and denying Mr. Dedalus's alcoholism.

Another element that suggests the tacit presence of alcoholism is the family environment. The physical setting of the novel offers a series of metaphors of an existence in an alcoholic home. The descriptions of the Dedaluses' many homes seem to embody the process of alcoholic disintegration:

At first the Dedaluses inhabit a large home with imposing furniture. They have a maid and are able to serve in an elegant and festive room a luxurious Christmas meal (p.29-30). Alcohol and financial loss clearly intersect in chapter two of the novel, offering an obvious but not highlighted suggestion as to why the Dedalus family's physical circumstances are so consistently at risk.

Comparing the meal described in the first chapter (p.29-30) to the tea leaving in chapter four (p.162-63) reveals a piercing yet subtle image of just how much Mr. Dedalus's drinking has cost his six children, his wife and himself. At that point in the narrative, the family has once again been evicted as the younger children tell Stephen in 'pig Latin' (Joyce, 163).

While taking notice of this unusual narrative method, Lilienfeld takes mostly into consideration the second chapter in the novel as it is frequently present and easily to spot in there. The second chapter 'denies while representing alcoholic denial as a strategy of character and plot' and owns 'the fullest mimetic representation of the impact of Simon Dedalus's increasing alcoholism on Stephen's psychological development.' (Lilienfeld)

Besides the influence of parental alcoholism already mentioned, it has been noted that also this his father's disease has influenced Stephen's artistic development, although the evidence of this relationship may not be visible at a first reading.

Lilienfeld argues that besides the divisions created by the link between Simon's failures and his drinking, the narrative, although appears to deny that Stephen's artistic aspiration and his poetry are tied to Simon's binge drinking, it nevertheless grounds consistently young Dedalus's writing process and products in the context of his father's alcohol consumption. As each instance of narrative denial indicates to Simon's alcoholism, the reader may acknowledge that one origin of Stephen's successful completing of the villanelle is his use of art as a deflector of pain.

Stephen's Dedalus's art seems to begin in suffering. His distress leads him to distance himself from what is happening by creative uses of fantasy, an activity at first not always under his control.

To manage his alienation while attending Clongowes Wood School, Stephen depends on escape via language, a strategy that he adopts to survive his worsening circumstances when he cannot return to Clongowes, but must live at home and attend Belvedere, too. Stephen uses stories, analogical thinking, reminder devices, pre-writing, chanting, and obsessional devotion to words for sound and music rather than connotative material. 'Through absorption by language, Stephen simultaneously makes sense of and escapes his physical and emotional surroundings.' (Lilienfeld)

By the time of the second chapter, Stephen's production of the 'foetus narrative' is a positive use of fantasy, a spontaneous result of the necessary survival skill of dissociation. The 'foetus narrative' coats a paralipsis that suppresses crucial information. It obscures both the sale of the Cork property and the connection of that sale to Simon's alcoholism, a connection suggested by the imposition of the bar scenes over the 'censored' (Genette, 53) property sale.

Because dissociation is inseparable from Stephen Dedalus's use of fantasy, it is inextricably implicated in his developing abilities as a writer. Thus young Dedalus's creative process is embedded by narrative permission in the complex implications of the 'foetus narrative'. (Lilienfeld)

The consequences of his father's drinking are inescapable, no matter how much the narrative imitates or changes direction from the traumatic consciousness. Stephen will have no patrimony, no position, no future of the sort he had been lead to expect he would have. Stephen's annihilation panic deflects this information and he cannot focus on his father as its cause.

Furthermore, I will try to explain the aforementioned term of 'foetus narrative'. What Lilienfeld calls this way, in the second chapter, might serve as a fictionalised replica of a kind of trauma, an acute trauma grounded in another one, in a life of chronic trauma in the shadow of a father's alcoholism. When this occurs, the child witnessing the alcohol problem 'splits' himself or herself,

blaming him or herself, while denying parental behaviour and its consequences. The foetus narrative occurs during the narrative time in which the Cork bar scene takes place.

The novel also manages to render the father's dramatic deterioration: ineffectual incoherence and rage, blaming external forces, refusal of the adult role toward his wife and son. Also worth mentioning here is the presence of Simon Dedalus's mounting rage and grief over Parnell and his inability to control his feelings that occur at Christmas. Such behaviours are also part of patterns of loss of control and are shown at other times in the text when he is depicted to be drinking.

His conduct mirrors dramatic changes in Stephen, as well, as his feelings become constricted, numbed, or increasingly flat. Thus, the denial process of alcoholism occurs in the son in a way that mirrors the denial process of his father.

Thus, it seems that Stephen 'cannot trust or bond with others, either men or women' (Brown). It would, in fact, be odd if he could, given his upbringing. 'Some affected children by parental alcoholism have severe problems with trust and attachments' (Brown, 248). Characterizing the behaviour of some of her patients, Brown might as well be describing the fictional figure set in the late 19th century Dublin, Stephen Dedalus: 'lack of trust is defensive, a constant factor in regulating intimacy as is a vigilant stance and suspicion of the motives of others' (248). Indeed, in his journal, Stephen describes his defences as his spiritual-heroic-refrigerated apparatus' (Joyce, 252). Not to love and not to trust were sensible survival strategies that enabled him to arrive at the point where he could leave the home.

Interestingly, the reader is not provided with any kind of explanation when it comes to Simon Dedalus. His 'voicelessness' (Lilienfeld) is a deliberate construction of the novel's narrative choices. Simon's consciousness is never rendered to us. His behaviour is visible, but the motivation behind it and his feelings are opaque. Also, there is no consecutive narrative sequence depicting his fall into alcoholism.

Like Naremore, who sees only finances as Simon's problem, the narrative fronts financial problems as the cause of Simon's behaviour and his son's suffering. Stephanie Brown point out, however, 'that alcohol is a means to cope with something else that is identified as being the major problem' (35) is often one proof of denial in an alcoholic family. Because of its focus on financial reversal, 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man' encourages readers to find an alternative narrative to its suppressed presence of an alcoholic narrative. However, read through the lens of the 'biopsychosocial model of alcoholism' (Lilienfeld), the text's deliberate disclosures of character's and narrative's denial suggest that Simon's binge drinking affected both father and son.

Alcoholism is a complex illness, the symptoms of which include the conviction by the alcoholic and members of his or her family that the drinker is consuming by choice. Simon Dedalus's drinking is certainly 'culturally-normative and gender-specific, but, although as the result of the illness, thus non-willed, not benign'. (Lilienfeld) His drinking causes problems for him, his family, and influences Stephen's artistic choices.

Lilienfeld continues briefly with the reading of *Ulysses* and takes notes on the fact that Simon Dedalus's alcoholism seems to manifest a lot more bluntly in this case. Studying pages 237-239 of chapter 10 in 'Ulysses' ('Wandering Rocks') the reader familiar with twentieth century medical discussion of alcoholism might conclude that 'the biopsychosocial disease that affects Simon Dedalus in *Portrait* has infected the family dynamic'. (Lilienfeld) In this scene his only interest is using all the money he can to stand himself and others rounds of drinks at the bar. He seems so desperate not only to defend his right to drink, but to hide that drinking in his intention.

The denial narrative in *Portrait* is so successful that only narrative gaps and the character's behaviour circumstantially suggest that Simon Dedalus is an alcoholic. The 'superimposition' (Lilienfeld) of the drinking scenes onto the paralipsis of the sale of the Cork patrimony makes an indirect, yet fundamental, statement that drinking cost Simon his wealth and Stephen his inheritance, class status and secure future. Other measures of parental alcoholism are more hidden than that which is displayed in the aforementioned episode. Stephen's damaged emotional life, his dissociative episodes during which he slowly and courageously transforms pain into artistic

creativity, and his indirect, timid in fact, rebellion against his father, suggest the effects of the paternal drinking on the son.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In this way, perhaps for some of his readers it might come as a shock to find out that he was a binge drinker. But Joyce not only admitted to his drinking habits, he claimed that drinking made for an excellent writing aid. He is said to have believed that liquor heightened feelings and he could not write as well without the drinking process. Furthermore, Joyce seems to introduce a new method of suggesting the alcohol presence, a somehow tacit narrative, which renders alcoholism by denying it. This stands as evidence of his direct contact with heavy alcohol consumption and his capacity to transform the experience into literary greatness.

However, James Joyce has his place well established in this gallery and managed to portray, through both his life and his work, a paradox. The paradox of fearing, encountering and experiencing illness, madness, alcoholism around him, while the artist remained detached and able to use these experiences for his work. This is the behaviour of a genius, and his work can be considered without hesitation an absolute testimony to literary ingenuity.

References

- [1] Amis, Kingsley. *Everyday Drinking*. Bloomsbury USA, 2008.
- [2] Baillie, Brian. "Ireland sober is Ireland free": the confluence of nationalism and alcohol in the traumatic, repetitive, and ritualistic response to the famine in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Thesis. Haverford College. Dept. of English, 2005
- [3] Benstock, Bernard. Review: James Joyce: the citizen and the artist by C.H. Peake. Rev. of *James Joyce: the citizen and the artist* by C.H. Peake. Stanford University Press, 1977.
- [4] Brown, Stephanie. *Treating Adult Children of Alcoholics: A Developmental Perspective*. New York: Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1988.
- [5] Burgess, M. *Junk*. London: Penguin Books, 1999.
- [6] Caruth, Cathy. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- [7] Crowley, John W. *The White Logic: Alcoholism and Gender in American Modernist Fiction*. Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1994.
- [8] Davies SG. *James Joyce: A portrait of the artist*. London: Abacus, 1975.
- [9] Davies, J. B. *The Myth of Addiction*, 2nd ed. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997.
- [10] Degas, Edgar. *L'Absinthe*. 1876. Musee d'Orsay, Paris. The Artchive. Web. 13 Mar. 2011.
- [11] Earle, David M. "Green eyes, I see you. Fang, I feel": The Symbol of Absinthe in "Ulysses." *James Joyce Quarterly* 40.4, 2003.
- [12] Ellmann, Richard. *James Joyce, New and Revised Edition*. New York Oxford Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1982.
- [13] Fagnoli, A. Nicholas, and Michael Patrick Gillespie. *Critical Companion to James Joyce: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*. Facts On File, Inc. An imprint of Infobase Publishing, 2006.
- [14] Genette, Gérard. *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*. (Discours du récit) Trans. by Jane E. Lewin. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972.
- [15] Grizenko, Marisa Katherine. *Two Drunk Ladies: The Modernist Drunk Narrative and the Female Alcoholic in the Fiction of Jean Rhys and Jane Bowles*. Diss. Concordia University, 2010.

-
- [16] Healy, Patrick. Joyce: Through the Lacan Glass. Lacanian Ink. Web. 1996.
- [17] Healy, Patrick. The Modern and the Wake. Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1992.
- [18] Joyce, James. Dubliners. Oxford, 2000.
- [19] Joyce, James. Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man & Dubliners. Barnes & Noble, 2004.
- [20] Joyce, James. Ulysses. Penguin, 1992.
- [21] Kane, J. Imperial pathologies: medical discourse and drink in Dubliners' "Grace". Lit Med. Fall;14(2), 1995.
- [22] Kaplan RM. Bloomsday 100: the making of a literary legend. Australas Psychiatry, 2004.
- [23] Kaplan RM. Doctors, disease and James Joyce. Australian Family Physician Vol. 37. No. 8. August 2008.
- [24] Kaplan RM. Madness and James Joyce. Australas Psychiatry, 2002.
- [25] Lilienfeld, Jane. Reading Alcoholisms: Theorizing Character and Narrative in Selected Novels of Thomas Hardy, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf. St. Martin's Press. New York, 1999.
- [26] Lyons JB. Anatomy in James Joyce's Ulysses. Practitioner, 1972.
- [27] Menand, Louis. Silence, Exile, Punning, James Joyce's chance encounters. The New Yorker, July 2, 2012.
- [28] Naremore, James. Consciousness and Society in *A Portrait of the Artist*. Staley and Benstock 113-34, 1976.
- [29] Reznicek, Matthew. The Myth of Manliness in Irish National Culture, 1880–1922. Rev. of *The Myth of Manliness in Irish National Culture, 1880–1922* by Joseph Valente. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2011. Web. Purdue Research Foundation, 2013.
- [30] Rodwan Jr., John G. A Drink-Man among Drink-Men. Rev. of *Everyday Drinking* by Kingsley Amis. Open Letters Monthly. Web. December, 2008.
- [31] Stivers, Richard. A Hair of the Dog: Irish Drinking and American Stereotype. University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1976.